

# Ann Landers

Dear Readers:

Remember the reader who was having an argument with her sister-in-law about the proper way to set up toilet tissue? She was certain the right way was with the paper coming from the top—over the roll. Her sister-in-law insisted the paper should come down under the roll. I sided with her sister-in-law because that's the way my mother did it. Actually, I very nearly didn't print the letter because it seemed so inconsequential. Well, folks, I couldn't have been more mistaken.

In short order I was bombarded with letters from the four corners—including Samoa, Guadalajara, Athens and Mexico City. I had no idea so many people cared about toilet paper. Here's a sampling of what turns people on these days:

Dear Ann Landers:

Obviously you have never been a maid in a ladies' lavatory or you would have known that toilet paper should be dispensed from the top over. I've worked in several hotels and we are taught to set up the rolls in that way. Why? Don't ask me, but it's part of the instruction and when you work for a living you do as you are told.—Need My Paycheck.

Dear Ann Landers:

That letter signed "Paper Crazy" really got to me. I don't know why your mother thought it was best to have the paper come down close to the wall. I'll bet you never had any cats or dogs in your house. Well, we do—two of each—and if we ever let the toilet paper hang down—even two squares—it would be all over the place. The little darlings just love to drag the stuff around. So rethink your answer, dearie.—Tidy In Tallahassee

Dear Ann Landers:

Of course you are right about toilet paper being dispensed so it comes down from under the roll. The proof is the fancy, expensive kind with the printed designs. Why make it elegant if it's not going to be seen? And who can see it unless it's set up to hang down toward the wall—sort of like a painting. Slick to your guns, Annie.—

Also From Iowa (Des Moines Is My Town)

Dear Ann Landers:

I was very happy to see you print that letter about the toilet paper. It so happens I was taught, like you, to put the paper on the roller so it comes from under. My husband (a hot-tempered fellow with a serious booze problem) goes berserk if I don't do it the OTHER way. You wouldn't believe the yelling if he should find the tissue "upside down," as he calls it.

Thanks to Al-Anon I have learned to accept what I cannot change, so I go along with it, but I know, deep down in my heart, that I am right.

I am waiting until he is sober enough to read and then I will show him your column. He thinks you are very smart.—Another Admirer

Dear Ann:

You are right about the toilet paper—and for a very good reason. The roll of paper pivots about the line of support between the axle and the hollow cardboard tube. To get it to turn requires a certain torque which comes from the tension in the paper being withdrawn. The greater the distance between the plane of the paper being pulled and the axle support line, the less force is required and the less chance of tearing the paper before you have enough.—Your Friendly  
Physics Prof

Dear Prof:

I'll take your word for it. I bothered Jerome Wiesner, president of MIT, once this year already. And thanks to all who wrote. How nice to have had such an easy Monday!

Dear Ann:

This letter is being written by four picked-on kids. The problem is our mother. She is a nutty perfectionist.

From morning till night all we hear is, "Hang up your coats! Turn off the lights! Clean out the bathtub! Straighten your clothes closets!" It's nag, nag from morning till night. Any suggestions on how to get her off our backs?—The Quads In Rock Island

Dear Rocks:

Yes. Hang up your coats. Turn off the lights. Clean out the bathtub and straighten your clothes closets.

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